John Drew.

Continued from Preceding Page.

Wyndham, Bret Harte, Meredith, W. S. Gilbert, Burnand, Robert Browning, the Prince of Wales, afterward King Edward VII., and others.

The memoirs refer humorously to our German visit in 1886. Mr. Drew asserts that "this was the first and only time that an entire American company visited Germany." I am not sure that this is correct. An "Uncle Tom's Cabin" company was taken abroad by Jarrett and Palmer in the 70's or early 80's and played some engagements in Germany. However, perhaps "Uncle Tom's Cabin," with its blood hounds, donkeys, Jubilee singers and triplicate "Marks's" should be classified as a circus.

John and I had prepared ourselves for this German trip before we left New York by a few week's calls on "Mr. Berlitz," he to make his first acquaintance with the language and I to revive my memory of an almost-forgotten grammar school course in German that I had gone through at the age of twelve or thirteen.

It cannot be said that the performance of German plays adapted into English and presented by an American company during the hot nights of August appealed strongly to the publics of Hamburg and Berlin. Certain of the English-speaking visitors in the cities attended the performances and a few handfuls of bewildered Germans.

At the Thalia Theater in Hamburg and the Wallner Theater in Berlin dressers were provided for us. Drew speaks of his in Berlin, a tailor-shop worker by day. He says: "the dresser who looked after me was so zealous in the performance of his job that he followed me on to the stage one night. In 'Love on Crutches' there was a scene in the last act in which Lewis and I stood at the back of the stage, partly concealed from the audience. The play was going very badly, Lewis whispered to me, 'I'll bet you that Grandma (Mrs. Gilbert, who was playing down stage) gets the first laugh.' Before I could answer him, I got the first laugh, for just then my dresser, who had followed me from the dressing room, pulled up my coat at the neck. He had not felt satisfied with the way the coat set and righted it in full view of the audience."

I have an almost painful remembrance of those Berlin and Hamburg performances, the heat, the strange feeling of our foreign surroundings and the unresponsive audiences. Never did a company work so hard to put over the spirit of light comedy and never were efforts more abortive. The harder we worked, the more intense the gloom over the spectators. We toiled like coal stokers, but fed no fires of enthusiasm. After such labor, to escape from the theater and drain down our first stein of Muenchner at the Franziskaner Garten was like a glimpse into heaven.

IV.

The more succesful engagement in Paris of "The Taming of the Shrew" is described, and of the reception of the play by the critics, he says: "Many of the critics thought there was too much horse play; they were shocked when *Katherine* boxed *Petruchio's* ears. They found too much violence in the playing. Then, too, the play was coarse and flat and dull."

There is a charming tale of Joseph Jefferson illustrating the beneficent influence of humility. In the first flush of his success as *Rip Van Winkle,* he told Drew, he thought himself fairly important and that everybody knew about it.

"At the very least he felt that had put Washington Irving on the map with this Boucicault version of Rip."

One night after the theater as he was going to his room in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, a stockily built man with a grizzled beard got into the elevator.

"Are you playing in town now, Mr. Jefferson?" he asked.

Jefferson, as he replied in the affirmative, rather pitied the man for his ignorance and his total lack of understanding at what was going on in the world. What a simpleton he must be who didn't know that Rip was having a record run!

When the man reached his floor and got out Jefferson asked the elevator boy, "Who was that?"

"Why," said the boy, in his turn pitying Jefferson for his ignorance, "That's General Grant."

The later chapters lack something of the interest of the earlier parts of the book, mainly because they deal with events and productions more or less familiar to every one and because they are a record of the annual appearance of Mr. Drew in new plays. The more or less commercialized theater of to-day has obliterated much of the charm of the hard working theater of tradition. Now the particular question about any play is not of its artistic value, but as to whether it shall have a two years' run or go to the storehouse a week after production.

V.

I could wish that Mr. Drew had given us more of himself as an artist. He has told what others thought of his work, but it would have been instructive to the younger generation of actors if this noted player had told something of his methods, his knowledge of comedy effect, of balance, control and, in short, of the art of acting as he applied it unerringly to his various characters. Perhaps such an exposition would not have had an appeal to so large a body of readers, but I should have welcomed it and so would many of my profession to whom Art is not spelled with a small and sordid *a* and for whom commercialism and trade are not the means of obtaining the highest rewards of the theater.

Quite worth the quoting here is his curtain speech on the night of his debut as a Frohman star, the ending of which ran:

"I feel that this great greeting might not have been for me had it not been for one who from the beginning of my career has watched and guided my steps, smoothing the way to success for me and encouraging me in moments of trial and discouragement, and, in fine, striving to make me worthy of this honor to-night.

"I feel, too, that this poor and halting tribute at the least is little to offer after the years of care and trouble he has bestowed on me, but it is from the heart I wish to offer it. I am glad, too, to offer it before you, his friends as well as mine. I see I need not name him, my friend and preceptor, Mr. Augustin Daly."

The memoirs leave the final impression with the reader of a companionship with a kindly, cultured gentleman, one quick to observe, a delightful raconteur, an artist to whom the theater has always appealed as a high and dignified calling, whose traditions are held in respect.

Many reproductions of old portraits, scenes from plays and theater programmes adorn the attractive volume, and among the latter is one of Mrs. Drew's Arch Street Theater, whose company, her son assures us, vied in excellence with that of the celebrated Wallack company of New York, and we read thereon with vast envy that the price of orchestra seats was 75 cents. And there were no agencies and speculators at that time in Philadelphia.

There is a commendation of the book and its author in the Foreword by Booth Tarkington which is cordial and characteristically Tarkingtonian and in which he says nice things about Drew's *Petruchio.*

The book evokes in me a sense of gratitude that the representative of one of our great theatrical families, which include the Booths, the Davenports, the Wallacks and the Jeffersons, whose own distinguished performances have done much for the dignity and worth of the American stage, should have given us this record as a perpetual memory. The book should be found on every theatrical five foot shelf.

A Child's Story of American Literature

By ALGERNON TASSIN and ARTHUR BARTLETT MAURICE.

ONE may write the history of a country and say very little about its literature, but one cannot write of its literature without saying a good deal about its history. For the literature of a people is the expression of their life. That is why you will find that this chapter, devoted to the Revolutionary period, has more in it of history than of literature.

The thing of chief importance, as it seems to us, about the War for Independence we were never taught when we went to school. It was very unfortunate because it allowed us to grow up with very wrong ideas. Did you know that the only difference between a rebellion and a revolution is that the one fails and the other succeeds? When a man loses, a future generation says he was a rebel and although his cause may have been right, he took the wrong method of protesting against what he called tyranny. When he wins, a future generation says that he took the right method and that he was a patriot. But that future generation is very unjust if it assumes that the first man loved his country any less than the second man. That is what we were not taught when we went to school, and it was a long time before we found out how unjust our judgments had been about the people of the Revolutionary period and what a false notion we had of the whole state of affairs then.

First of all, we were unjust to the loyalists, the Americans who wanted to remain loyal to England. Nobody told us that the thing which even patriotic boys can see so clearly at this end of it was all confused to grown men at that end of it. Nobody knew then whether the event would show him to be a rebel or a patriot. There were doubtless as many loyalists as there were nationalists who had only selfish and commercial motives. But the majority on the one side were equally as patriotic and liberty loving as the majority on the other. They differed merely in their definition of liberty. The loyalists were those who went on thinking as all the colonists had thought ever since they landed in America, that their liberty lay in upholding their rights as Englishmen. The nationalists thought their liberty lay in setting up a government of their own. Each side called the other side traitor.

Another thing no one told us in school was that these loyalists and nationalists were not two different kinds of men, set definitely apart from each other by opposing interests. They were neighbor against neighbor, friend against friend, one member of the family against another member of the family. Ben Franklin's son was a loyalist, working against the cause for which his father was striving; Randolph of Virginia saw his father driven into exile by the cause he eagerly left home to join. And the third thing we were not taught is even more important still. One cannot say that even the greater number of people in America were those whom we now call patriots. It is possible that the majority were loyalists, and that the minority were simply more strong willed and more energetic and better organized. But wherever the patriots grew powerful enough to do so they silenced the loyalists or drove them out of the country.

This was not wise or right, but perhaps it was necessary. At least when it was a matter of life or death you cannot blame them. But we live at a different time, and we see now that we at any rate have no right to blame the loyalists for remaining true to their convictions. For they were convictions which even the greatest patriots shared at the beginning. The very war itself did not begin as a war for separation. "When I first took command of the Continental army," wrote George Washington, "I abhorred the idea of Independence." Thomas Jefferson and Ben Franklin felt the same way. The first Continental Congress demanded only representation in return for taxation; otherwise it was as loyal to England as England itself could have wished. It was rushed into changing its mind only by subsequent events. However natural, therefore, it was not fair for one man at the time to call another a traitor merely because he had now given up an idea which the other man wanted to hold on to. The Declaration of Independence itself was passed by Congress only with difficulty, and it came as a startling surprise to most people in the country.

About the Constitution and the articles which should compose it there was a similar clash of opinion between neighbors and brothers, and a hurling back and forth of the ugly word "traitor." Though the second difference of opinion was very violent, it did not at the time lead to the bitter civil war which the other difference had resulted in. But it was this same difference which seventy-five years later the North and the South fought out on the battlefield. Nor is it ended yet. Even at this very moment some of the States of our country are again raising the question which people just after the Revolution were quarreling about with such angry words. In a way, it was the same question as the one they had just been fighting about with gun and bayonet. Shall we be a loyal part of an empire or shall we be home rulers? So you see, it is very unfair of us to call the loyalists traitors because